

Work Task E11:	Walker Lake, Imperial National Wildlife Refuge
Partners:	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)
Point of Contact:	Gregg Garnett, LC-2455 (702) 293-8644
Purpose:	Evaluate Walker Lake as a possible habitat creation project.
Conservation Measures:	Potential site for creation of habitat for the covered species.
Long-Term Goal:	Provide consistent water into the site to maintain adequate breeding habitat requirements for rail (marsh), southwestern willow flycatcher (wetted/moist forest understory and adjacent open water), and/or native fish habitat.
Location:	River Mile 88.7, California side. The lake is located on lands managed by Imperial National Wildlife and the Bureau of Reclamation.
FY05 Estimate:	\$61,000 will fund in-house staff including Yuma Area Office's engineering support office.
Project Description:	<p>Walker Lake is a historically occupied southwestern willow flycatcher site on the LCR. Currently, Walker Lake maintains a subsurface connection to the Colorado River. Seasonally, surface water is reduced in area or not present in the lake. In addition, high evaporation rates have concentrated salts into the lake and the surrounding soil. The project includes dredging/excavating a shallow channel to provide continual surface flow into Walker Lake to maintain open water, marsh habitat, and flooded adjacent forested habitats throughout the breeding season's of Yuma clapper rail and southwestern willow flycatcher. This additional water will dilute and flush salts from the lake and surrounding area, providing more suitable substrates for aquatic, emergent, and riparian vegetation which, in turn, will provide increased habitat for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species.</p> <p>Conceptual design and surveying has been initiated, preliminary project scoping and scheduling completed. Currently, information is being gathered to prepare regulatory compliance documents.</p> <p>Draft designs to be completed by August 2005. All compliance and permitting documents will be obtained by early spring 2006. All dredging and excavation work is projected to begin in FY06.</p>